

Appl. No. 10/817,022
Atty Docket No. 1322-002/JRD
Amendment Dated September 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2006

REMARKS

A final Office Action, dated March 7, 2006, rejects pending claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 21, 23 and 24, allows claims 2, 3, and 25-32, and objects to claims 6, 8-20, and 22. Claims 1, 4, 17, 22 and 23 have been amended herein. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowed Claims

Claims 2, 3 and 25-32 are allowed.

Specification Amendment

The noted paragraph has been amended herein to correct two typographical errors. Namely, the word "commutation" in the first sentence has been corrected to now read "communication." Also, the last sentence of the noted paragraph has been amended to now end with a period rather than a colon.

35 USC § 102(b)

In light of the foregoing clarifications to claims 1 and 4, applicant respectfully traverses the examiner's rejection of claims 1, 4, and 5-21 as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,785,341 to Fenton ("Fenton").

Essential elements of these claims are missing from Fenton. For example, as currently amended, claims 1 and 4 now clarify that the dampener (claim 1) or linkage (claim 4) extendable between the towing vehicle and the fifth-wheel trailer is "disconnected" between towing vehicle and fifth-wheel trailer when in the non-engaged position. As explained more fully beginning on page 5, line 7 of the specification, this disconnection allows the trailer stabilizing device to decouple the biasing force when desired, such as when maneuvering the fifth-wheel trailer relative to the towing vehicle.

Neither Fenton, nor any other references of record, teach or suggest such a structure. Rather, the shock absorber 38 and air spring 36 in Fenton remain connected between the trailer and towing vehicle during all phases of operation.

Since Fenton is missing this essential element of currently clarified claims 1 and 4, it cannot anticipate or otherwise render obvious these claims. Moreover, since claims 5-21 depend on one of these allowable claims, they too should be in condition for allowance.

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Similarly, none of the references of record teach or suggest any fifth-wheel trailer stabilization devices that are detachable secured to the receiver of a pick-up truck towing the trailer. Accordingly, since claim 22, which included these basic limitations, has been placed into independent format. Accordingly, it too should now be in condition for allowance along with claims 23 and 24 which dependent on it.

In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that all of the currently pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests that the case be passed to issuance. If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact applicants' attorney at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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